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ABSTRACT

The myriad of educational reforms directed toward increased quality will drastically change the responsibilities of school principals. To make a consequential contribution to improving the effectiveness of public school education in Kentucky by preparing more effective leaders for administrative positions, a new principal preparation program at Western Kentucky University was developed. The program, designed to encompass the tenets of national reform and to accommodate the state-mandated educational requirements, allows prospective administrators to decide among the three certification levels (early elementary, middle school, and secondary). Additionally, students may select from the following specializations: supervisor of instruction, director of pupil personnel, school business manager, or school superintendent. The primary ingredients of the program include a generic study of administration, a study of the technical aspects of educational administration, a knowledge and application of research findings, the opportunity for supervised practice, and finally, the demonstration of competence. A skill matrix that graphically illustrates the components of the program and their relationship to each other is included. (18 references) (KM)

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THE REFORM OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION: THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY MODEL

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THE REFORM OF ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION:

THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY MODEL

The former program for certification of school administrators at Western Kentucky University had been in place for almost twenty years without significant revision. Clearly it was time for innovation to meet the diverse and changing needs of today's prospective school administrators. The impetus for change was part of the prevalent reform atmosphere, and the inadequacy perceived by the faculty, as well as the Kentucky legislature. The Department of Educational Leadership faculty identified the problems and implemented a planned program to deal with the necessary change three years ago.

An advisory committee comprised of practicing school administrators contributed perceptions of the preparation necessities of effective school administrators. A faculty committee met regularly to study, discuss and assimilate the recommendations from the advisory committee, synthesize information from the literature, and become acquainted with current state statutes.

As a result of the study and work of this committee, the program outlined in this paper complies with or exceeds all the newly-mandated state requirements for administrator certification, including the recommendations articulated by the national professional school administrator associations,

and utilizes recommendations advanced by the local school administrators. This program will make a consequential contribution to improving the quality of public school education in Kentucky by preparing more effective leaders for administrative positions.

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

The essentiality for training highly competent individuals to assume leadership positions will be particularly critical in the immediate future (Patterson, Purkey, and Parker, 1986). The National Association of Elementary School Principals anticipates retirement of fifty-percent of their current membership by 1992 (Finn, 1986). Typical school administration programs have conveyed the impression that there should be a rationality, continuity, and orderliness in educational administration (Green, 1987). However, current literature and practice suggest that what really exists in the principalship is a great amount of ambiguity, chaos, and diversity (Morris, Crowson, Porter-Gehrie, and Hurwitz, 1984; Peterson, 1978). The sterotypical view of the principal as manager will not be sufficient to meet the current demands placed on the principal for instructional leadership (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, and Lee, 1982).

The growing knowledge base regarding effective schools consistently details the key role played by administrators in such schools (Bossert, 1985; Corcoran, 1985; Schlechty, 1985; Firestone and Wilson, 1983). Recent research on educational

reform and school improvement corroborates the interdependence of skilled administrators and student achievement (Anderson, 1985).

The myriad of educational reforms directed toward increased quality will drastically change school principals' responsibilities (Deal and Celotti, 1980). This articulates a realistic challenge to state education agencies, higher education, and local school districts to develop competent methods to select, prepare and reward school administrators. Such preparation programs will delineate the essential knowledge and skills necessary for effective leadership in the principalship. The program developed by Western Kentucky University (WKU) and enumerated herein supervene the requirements for both a knowledge and a skill base.

NATIONAL REFORM

Administrator preparation requirements outlined by the University Council for Educational Administration include five strands or program areas: "the study of administration, the study of the technical core of educational administration and the acquisition of vital administrative skills, the application of research findings and methods to problems, supervised practice, and demonstration of competence" (National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, 1987). By comparison, guidelines developed by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA)

feature the most vital goals, competencies, and delivery components that should be included in administrator preparation programs. The three aspects are further subdivided into seven "theoretical foundations," or areas in which any prospective administrator should receive training (AASA, 1982). The suggestions reflect AASA's conviction that the objective for academic preparation should be skill acquisition.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) identified twelve skills embraced as essential for success in the principalship. The twelve areas are: problem analysis, judgement, organizational ability, decisiveness, leadership, sensitivity, stress tolerance, oral communication, written communication, range of interest, personal motivation, and educational values (NASSP, 1982).

According to Yukl, the most important functions performed by principals appear to be the following: (1) development of goals, policies and directions; (2) to organize the school and design programs to accomplish the goals; (3) to monitor progress, solve problems, and maintain order; (4) to procure, manage, and allocate resources; (5) to create a climate for personal and professional growth and development; and, (6) to represent the school to the district office and the outside community (Yukl, 1982).

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE , 1987) has mandated that school administration programs in Kentucky provide knowledge and experience in the following areas: (1)

the study of research; (2) the study of curriculum; (3) the study of administrative theory; (4) the study of techniques of instruction and supervision; (5) the study of personnel administration; (6) the study of the uses of instructional technology; (7) the study of educational and psychological testing; (8) the study of the legal aspects of education; (9) the study of the role of the principal; (10) the study of business management and accounting procedures; and, (11) the study of community relations.

The preceding studies gave direction to the reform effort undertaken by the Department of Educational Leadership at Western Kentucky University. However, once the broad parameters were outlined, the faculty committee was charged with the responsibility for developing a neoteric program that would encompass the tenants of national reform and accommodate the state mandates requirements.

THE NEW ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM

The new principal preparation program at WKU requires the prospective administrator to make an initial decision concerning the level of certification. Three levels are possible: early elementary (grades K-4); middle school (grades 5-8); and, secondary (grades 9-12). Additionally, students may select from the following specializations: supervisor of instruction, director of pupil personnel, school business manager, or school superintendent.

Requirements and prerequisites are different for each level and each specialization. This paper will specifically address the principal preparation program.

To be considered for admission to the principals' preparation program at WKU, a candidate must meet certain minimum criteria for admission. First, the candidate must have three years of successful teaching experience appropriate to the grade level of the certification requested. This requirement prevents teachers certified in secondary education from obtaining an elementary principal's endorsement, or vice versa, without training in the appropriate field. A Master's degree and a standard teaching certificate are also required. Essentially, school administration is a post-Master's program; however, Kentucky does not give incremental salary increases for an Educational Specialist degree, but rather refers to the completion of sixty semester hours beyond the Bachelor's degree as a Rank I certification.

Course requirements are divided into Level I (eighteen semester hours) and Level II (twelve semester hours). Level I courses include: (1) a course in the general foundations of administration; (2) a course in the use and application of educational technology to educational administration; (3) a course in the legal aspects of education, especially as they apply to the school principal; (4) a course in instructional leadership, which includes the monitoring, supervising, and evaluating teachers and the

skills to recognize effective teaching; and, (5) a course in the role of the principal appropriate to the certification area.

Level II courses include: (1) a course in school business management appropriate to the principal's certification level. This is not a repetition of a general finance course which typically examines finance from the central office/superintendent's perspective; but, rather an intense course in managing school finances. (3) a course in the administration of school personnel; and, (4) a seminar in administration. Critical to the program's success is the

seminar in administration. The seminar will be composed of principals who are in their first years in the principalship. The principals will be given the opportunity to meet with other practicing administrators and a variety of university, local school and state department personnel. Discussion topics will reflect upon the application of research to the existing school environment. Additionally, seminar participants will share information regarding their entry into the profession and the skill acquisition essential for achievement.

Certification as a principal in Kentucky also requires the candidate to complete an intensive internship before formal credentials are approved. The applicant must have completed the eighteen semester hours of academic course work

prior to employment as an intern principal. During the internship the candidate will be assisted and monitored by three practicing professionals; including another principal, a central office administrator, and a professor of educational administration. Successful completion of the internship grants the candidate certification for four additional years during which time the remaining twelve hours of academic coursework must be completed. If the candidate is unsuccessful in the internship, one more opportunity for employment is afforded to the candidate, providing a school system is willing to employ the person. The supervised

principal's internship program permits the candidate an opportunity for supervised practice regarding skill acquisition and the occasion to demonstrate competence of acquired skills. The internship provides the aspiring principal the probability of success through guided, supervised practice and latitude for additional skill development (Marley, 1988). However, the internship does not acquit the candidate of the principal's responsibility, because the intern is legally the principal

of the school with all its duties and responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

The University Council for Educational Administration outlined five program areas critical to the preparation of future administrators. The Department of Educational

Leadership at Western Kentucky University has developed a program for potential administrators which incorporates the areas specified by UCEA. In addition, the program attempts to meet the needs of future principals by including components recommended by other organizations. The primary ingredients of the program include a generic study of administration, a study of the technical aspects of educational administration, a knowledge of and application of research findings, the opportunity for supervised practice, and, finally the demonstration of competence. (A skill matrix is attached which graphically illustrates the components of the program and their relationship to each other.)

MATRIX OF SKILLS

UCEA AND WKU

WKU CORE PROGRAM	UCEA RECOMMENDATIONS
SCHAD 685 Foundations of School Administration	Generic administration
SCHAD 674 Educational Technology	Technical skills Research skills
SCHAD 691, 692, 693 The Principalship	Technical skills Specific administration Research skills Supervised practice
SCHAD 694 Seminar in School Administration	Supervised practice Demonstration of competence Specific administration Research skills Technical skills
INTERNSHIP	Supervised practice Demonstration of competence Specific administration Research skills Technical skills

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM - SKILLS MATRIX

Department of Educational Leadership

Program Courses	NASSP Skills	State Certification Curriculum Standards	Skills for Effective Leadership
Fnd 509 Methods of Research	Problem analysis	Study of research (b)	Planning Evaluation
SecEd 580 ElEd 503 Curriculum .	Range of Interest Educational values	Study of research (b) Study of curriculum (c)	Planning Evaluation Technical skills
Fnd 577 Philosophy of Education	Educational values		Leadership Group process skills Technical skills
Ed 544 Teaching Strategies	Educational values	Study of research (b) Study of techniques (d)	Planning Group process skills Evaluation Technical skills
SchAd 585 Found of School Administration	Problem analysis Organizational ability Decisiveness Leadership Personal motivation	Study of admin. theory (a) Study of techniques of instruction & supvn. Study of personnel admin.	Planning Human relations Leadership Group process skills Management Technical skills
SchAd 684 Supervising Personnel	Organizational ability Leadership Sensitivity Educational values	Instructional supervision Study of use of educational technology Study of personnel admin.	Human relations Communications Leadership Group process skills Evaluation
CnEd 550 Intro to Counseling and Guidance	Problem analysis Judgement Sensitivity Stress tolerance Personal motivation	Study of educational and psychological testing	Human relations Leadership Group process skills Personal development Technical skills
SchAd Educational Technology	Organizational ability	Study of use of technological tools in instruction	Planning Entrepreneurship Management Technical skills
SchAd 677 School Law	Decisiveness Educational values	Study of legal aspects of education	Planning Entrepreneurship Personal development Technical skills
SchAd 691 & 692 The Principalship Elementary and Secondary	Problem analysis Judgement Organizational ability Decisiveness Leadership Sensitivity Educational values Personal motivation	Study of administrative theories and techniques Study of the role of the principal	Planning Human relations leadership Group process skills Entrepreneurship Evaluation Management Technical skills
SchAd 588 Business Mgmnt	Problem analysis Judgement Organizational ability	Study of business mgmnt and accounting procedures	Planning Entrepreneurship Management Technical skills
SchAd 682 School/Comm Relations	Judgement Leadership Sensitivity Stress tolerance Oral communication Written communication Range of interest	Study of community relations	Human relations Communications Group process skills Entrepreneurship Personal development
SchAd 686 Instructional Leadership	Leadership Sensitivity Educational values	Study of techniques of instructional supervision	Planning Human relations Leadership Group process skills
SchAd 694 Seminar in School Administration	All of the NASSP skills	All of the state curriculum requirements	All skills

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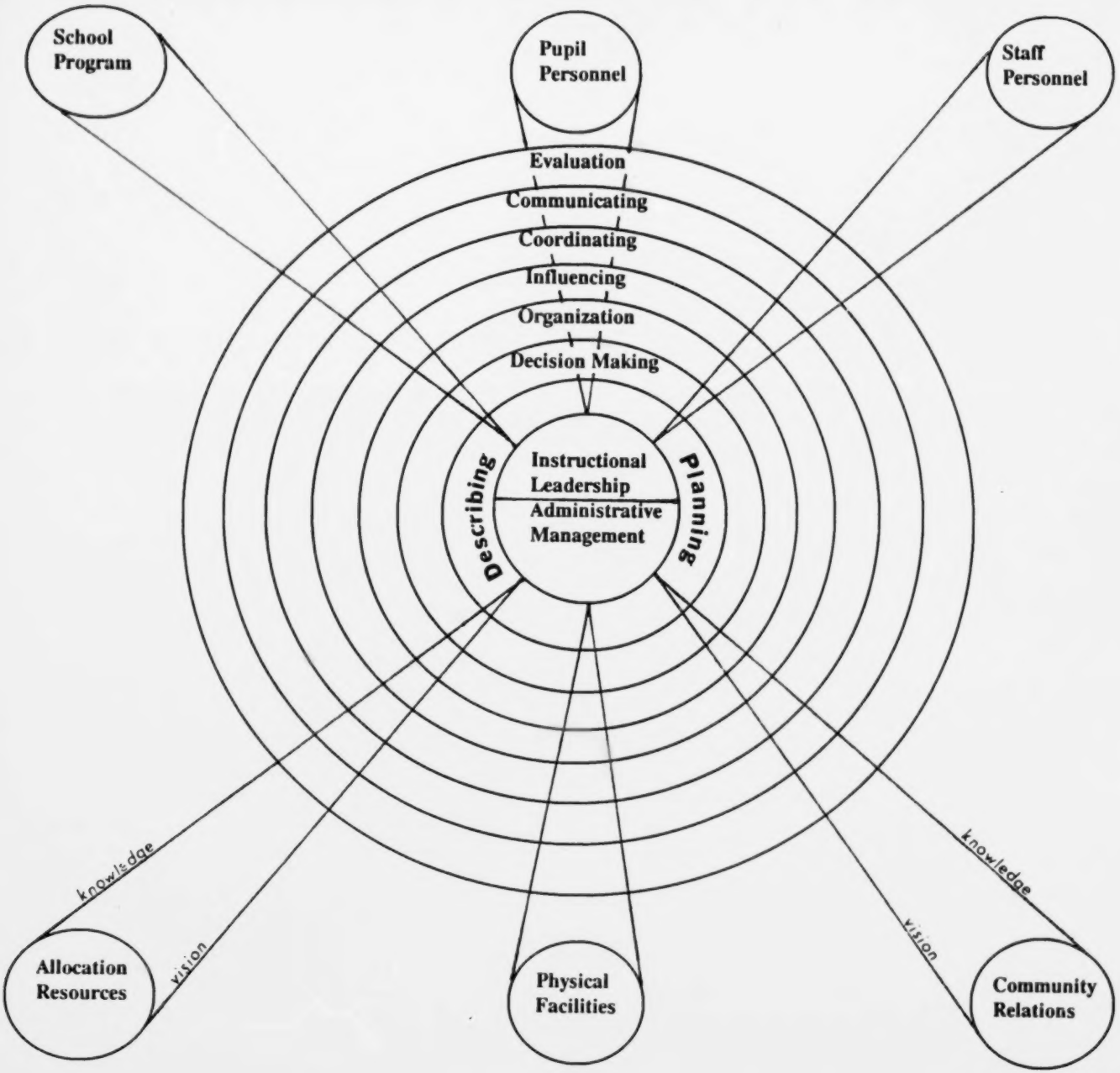
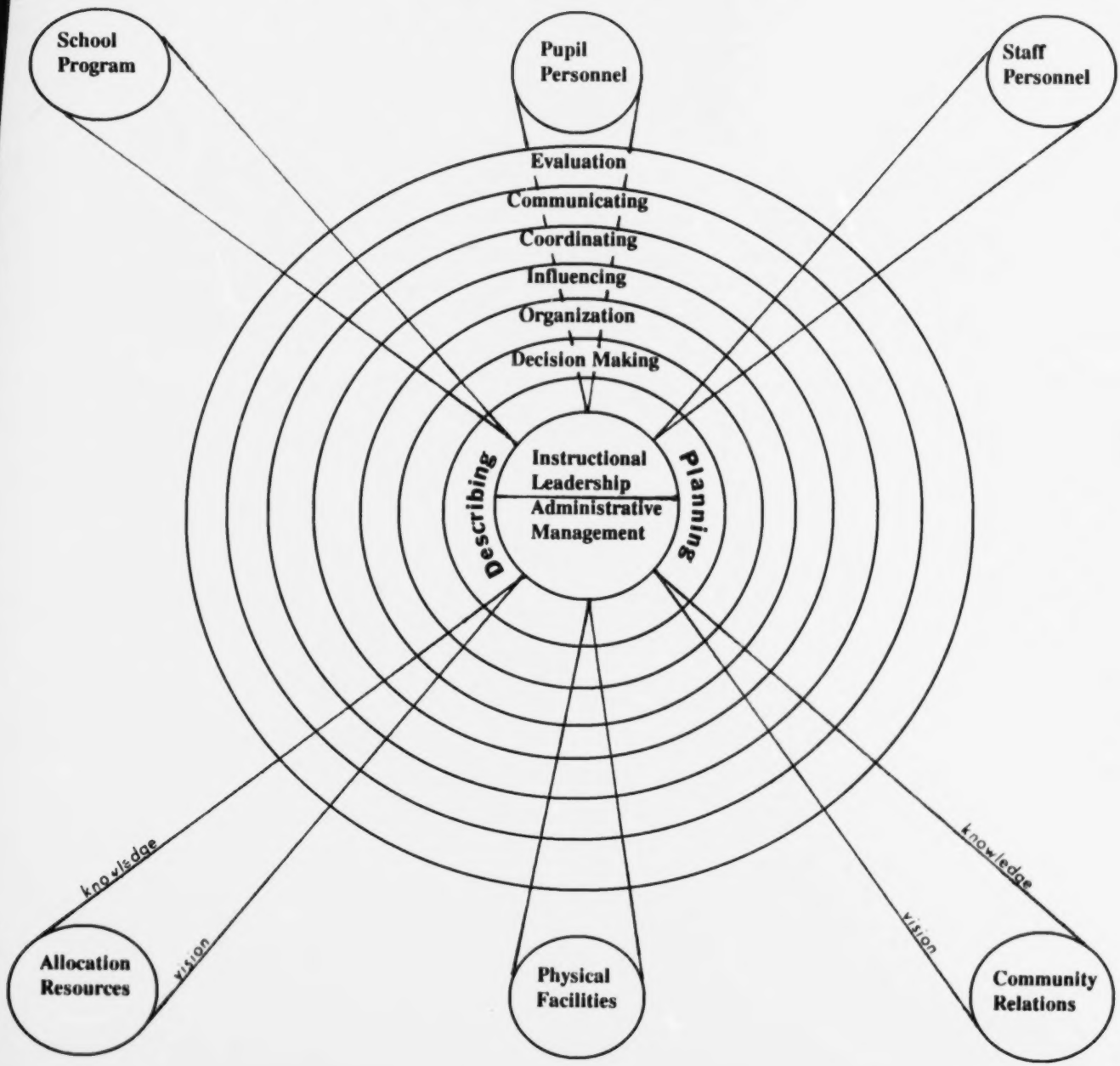


Western Kentucky University
Educational Leadership Department
Planning Model



Western Kentucky University
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Planning Model

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